

# THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' SELF-ESTEEM AND SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

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## **Abstract**

*This research was aimed to describe the correlation between students' self-esteem and speaking performance. This research was conducted due to the fact that many students in English Education Study Program of FKIP UNTAN faced the speaking problem. This problem was mainly caused by students' less confidence on their speaking ability. This research applied the correlational design. This research worked with students in Batch 2016. The techniques used for data collection were interview and measurement, while the tools were questionnaire and interview guide. The findings revealed that the correlation coefficient between self-esteem and speaking performance was 0.4. This indicated that these two variables had moderate correlation. Thus, there was a correlation between students' self-esteem and speaking performance.*

**Keywords:** *Correlational Study, Self-esteem, Speaking Performance*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the area of English language learning, speaking is one of the productive skills which involves communicative performance, and other important elements, such as, pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, etc. Torky (2006) explained that speaking is the means through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes and viewpoints. Efrizal (2012) also expressed that speaking is of great significance for the people interaction where they speak everywhere and every day. Overall, it can be concluded that speaking is the way of how people deliver their thoughts orally.

The development of speaking skill should be prioritized in an English class as it is the means of oral communication. Hosni (2014) considered that speaking as the most important skill among four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language. Furthermore, Torky

(2006) also argued that success in learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. Therefore, in terms of practicality, speaking is the most used skill in human's daily life.

As the development of speaking is very vital, it is essential to identify the factors contributing to one's speaking skill. Mohseni and Ameri (2010, p.44) stated that "cognitive factors and affective factors are two factors that influence one's speaking performance". They further explained that cognitive factors consist of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation while affective factors consist of motivation, anxiety, and self-esteem. Among those elements, self-esteem is one of affective factors which present much contribution in students' speaking performance. Thus, in this study, the researcher was inspired to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and speaking skill.

Self-esteem is the opposite of shyness, in which the students believe on their capability on accomplishing a task.

In terms of speaking performance, students who have high self-esteem would be willing to communicate frequently in a foreign language, particularly English. Ariyanti (2016) further added that learners with self-esteem are potential to perform speaking in more fluent way because they make the problem of making mistakes becomes the last matter to think about. Dulay, Burt, & Krashen (1982) also mentioned that the students with high self-esteem would be in secure place and become successful in learning a language. Thus, it can be concluded that learners with high self-esteem have better speaking performance rather than those who do not.

Nowadays, it is widely believed that self-esteem becomes one of the big challenges for students to deal with their speaking performance mostly faced by adult students in university level. This is because adult students have lower self-esteem compared to the teenager students. Adult students are worried about making mistakes while they are speaking. This kind of situation was also observed in the students of English Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University (FKIP UNTAN). Pratama (2018) who also conducted a study on students of English Education Study Program, particularly on those who took Speaking for Academic Presentation class, found that students are too nervous to speak in front of the class. He further added that “the students were too worried if they would make a mistake or be judged unattractive” (p.2). Fitriani (2015) in her research on third semester students of FKIP UNTAN also discovered the same problem. “The students are not confident with their grammar, afraid of being criticized, lack of vocabularies, nervous, worry, and anxious.” Thus, the speaking problem happening to the English Department students of FKIP UNTAN is due to their unbelief on their own speaking ability.

After reviewing some studies conducted by others, the researcher also did a pre-liminary research on the higher batch students, particularly those who are working on their final project. It is known that they have already taken many speaking classes. At first, the researcher assumed that they would have higher self-esteem and be willing to speak English with their classmates. In fact, after doing a short observation, they preferred to speak either Indonesian language or mother tongue when they met up with each other. Most of them were unwilling to speak English. After interviewing some students, the researcher found that their unwillingness was caused by the lack of confidence and the fear of making mistakes. Some of them even said their friends often laugh at them when he or she suddenly spoke English in the community. Some of them also admitted that they were afraid of being discriminated if they spoke English when meeting up with their friends. Thus, it can be concluded that the problem of low self-esteem also happened on the students in the higher batch.

The problem happening on one's self-esteem in speaking motivated the researcher to do further investigation on the relationship of self-esteem and speaking competence. There were several previous researches with the variable of “speaking” or “self-esteem”. Firstly, Randa (2017) conducted a study to find out the correlation between self-esteem and students' English achievement. The research participants were the tenth-grade students of SMAN 3 Ketapang in the academic year 2015-2016. The result showed that there was a positive correlation between self-esteem and students' English achievement. In this study, the researcher used the same research design but put her focus on particular language skill, which was speaking skill. The previous research only investigated students' English achievement in general as the participants was also senior high school students.

Secondly, Serawati (2018) also conducted a correlational study to find out the correlation between students' interest in speaking and their speaking achievement. The participant was eleventh grade students from MAN 2 Pontianak. The result indicated that there was significant correlation between students' interest and their speaking achievement.

Compared to the previous study, the research gap was on the change of variable. The previous studies have only investigated the students' interest while this research investigated students' self-esteem. The main purpose of this study was to describe the relationship of students' self-esteem and students' speaking skill. Therefore, this research is entitled "The Correlation between Students' Self-Esteem and Speaking Performance".

### **Method of Research**

The methodology was one of the most essential elements in a research. Describing the procedures of the research clearly and systematically was also necessary. The research was conducted to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and speaking performance.

In order to achieve this goal, the researcher used quantitative method. Habrat (2018) stated that "self-esteem was a complex construct and researchers needed to pose themselves a question about the specific goal of their study. Should the goal be to assess self-esteem of a person, representative of a certain population of subjects grouped according to a given criterion, the quantitative method will be more valid as it is likely to satisfy the criteria of prediction and replication" (p.54). Thus, the researcher applied quantitative method in this study.

Generally, quantitative method was the method dealing with statistical data. According to Creswell (2012), quantitative method was a method that used for measuring the data using statistical procedures. It was also explained by Creswell (2012) stated that "correlational designs were procedures in

quantitative research in which investigators measured the degree of association (or relation) between two or more variables using the statistical procedure of correlational analysis" (p.21).

In this research, the researcher applied the explanatory design as the purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between self-esteem and speaking performance. According to Creswell (2012, p.340), "explanatory research design was a type of correlational research in which the researcher is interested in the extent to which two variables (or more) co-vary, where variance or change in one variable is reflected in variance or change in the other". Creswell (2012) further explained the procedures of explanatory research design. Firstly, the researcher correlated two or more variables. Secondly, the data was collected at one point in time. Next, the participants were analyzed as a single group. Then, the researcher obtained at least two scores for each individual in the group—one for each variable. After that, the researcher reported the use of the correlation statistical test in the data analysis. Finally, the researcher made interpretations or drew conclusions from the statistical test results.

### **Research Participants**

The population of this research was the Batch 2016 students from English Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University. The reason for choosing them was because they had taken many subjects related to speaking. There were 104 students in semester 8 and they were divided into two groups. There are 60 students from morning class and 44 students from evening class. All of them were the participants in this research.

### **Data Collection**

In collecting the data for the research, the researcher used measurement technique and interview technique. While, the tools used in this

research were questionnaire and interview question.

First of all, the researcher applied measurement technique. According to Creswell (2012), measurement was a technique in which the researcher recorded information from individuals by asking them to answer questions on an instrument. For instance, a student completed questions on a survey or questionnaire asking about self-esteem. In this study, this technique was used to measure students' self-esteem by using questionnaire as the tool.

In this research, the researcher prepared two parts of questionnaires to measure students' self-esteem in speaking and to identify students' speaking scores. The first part comprised of ten questions adopted from by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012) in their survey about public speaking class anxiety scale. It has been reviewed before in the literature that the reason for adopting this questionnaire was because its high internal reliability and construct validity. The second part comprised of three questions which collected information about students' speaking score in three subjects, namely Speaking for General Communication, Speaking for Particular Purposes, and Speaking for Academic Purposes.

Secondly, the interview technique was used to collect information regarding how the lecturer of speaking subject assessed the students and to support the data about students' speaking performance. According to Given (2008), interviewing was a conversational practice where knowledge was produced through the interaction between an interviewer and interviewee. In this study, the researcher was the interviewer and one of the English department lecturers in FKIP Untan was the interviewee.

The reason for choosing her was because she had ever taught three subjects: Speaking for General Communication, Speaking for Particular Purposes, and Speaking for Academic Purposes. Identifying how she assessed

the students' speaking performance could ensure the validity and reliability of the students' score. In this study, the researcher created the structured question which meant that the questions were prepared ahead of time. These prepared questions helped the interviewer to have the smooth conversation with the interviewee.

In this research, the researcher used questionnaire and interview questions as the tools for collecting data. It had been stated before that the questions for interview were prepared ahead of time. The questions mainly discussed about the learning objective of each subject; the types of assignment given as well as the speaking components emphasized in each subject. These were helpful in determining the scoring system of the lecturer. Moreover, the findings were also used to support the data obtained from the students.

The second tool was questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to measure students' self-esteem and to know the students' score in each speaking subject. Creswell (2012, p.626) stated that "questionnaires were forms used in a survey design that participants in a study completed and returned to the researcher. Participants marked answers to questions and supplied basic, personal, or demographic information about themselves".

As the focus of this study was on the self-esteem, the researcher did some modifications on PSCAS (The Public Speaking Self-esteem Scale) in which the researcher only adopted 10 questions. The items adopted were mostly related to the communication apprehension, and comfort in speaking English. Mruk (2006) stated that low self-esteem was indicated by the fear to perform while high self-esteem was indicated by the comfort to perform. Communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation were the reflection of low self-esteem while the comfort in speaking reflected the high level of self-esteem.

## Data Analysis

Data analysis was known as the process of organizing the vast amount of information, transferring it from written words to a typed file, and interpreting the data as well as concluding the findings.

The process of data analysis for the questionnaire took several steps. Firstly, it was important to decide the scoring system for the questionnaires. The questionnaires used Likert Scale with items answered on a four-point scale - from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In this section, the researcher presented the data analysis for the questionnaire.

The first set of questionnaires comprised of five questions assessing high self-esteem and five others for assessing low-self-esteem. The second set of questionnaires only comprised of three questions which were used to collect the information of participants' speaking score on the subject of Speaking for General Communication, Speaking for Particular Purposes, and Speaking for Academic Purposes. The researcher calculated the individual average score, followed by the calculation of the overall mean score. The score interval was based on the grading scheme from the Tanjungpura University.

In analyzing the result of the interviews session, the researcher used several stages of analysis according to Cohen (2000). The researcher firstly transcribed the recording into the text. After that, the researcher classified, categorized, and ordered the transcription based on the purpose of this study. Finally, the researcher structured the narratives based on the contents of transcription and this was followed by the interpretation of data about how the lecturer assessed students' speaking performance.

Next, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula to compute the data of students' speaking score and self-esteem score. The formula was shown below.

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x \cdot \sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

(Siregar, 2015)

Note:

- r : Correlation coefficient between student's self-esteem and their speaking performance
- n : Number of respondents
- x : Distribution of student's self-esteem score
- y : Distribution of student's speaking score
- $\sum x$  : Total score of student's self-esteem distribution
- $\sum y$  : Total score of student's speaking score distribution
- $\sum xy$  : Total numbers of X multiplied by Y
- $x^2$  : X squared
- $y^2$  : Y squared

Next, the researcher categorized the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance based on the result of the calculation. The categorization was shown in the table below.

**Table 1. The Categorization of Correlation Coefficient**

Coefficient Interval	Qualification
00 – 0.199	Very weak
0.20 – 0.399	Weak
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate
0.60 – 0.799	Strong
0.80 – 1.000	Very strong

(Sugiyono, 2011)

Finally, the researcher concluded the findings based on the rejection and acceptance of hypothesis. According to Singh (2006, p. 235), "The rejection or acceptance of a null hypothesis was based upon some level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) as a criterion. In a psychological and educational circle, the 5 percent level of significance (0.05) was often accepted as a standard for rejection ". The null

hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) will be accepted if the  $r_{table} \geq r_{xy}$ . While, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) will be accepted if the  $r_{table} \leq r_{xy}$ . To identify the  $r$ -table, the researcher calculated the degree of freedom (Df) by subtracting the number of participants with two ( $N-2$ ). Then, based on the Df and level of significance, the researcher identified the value of  $r_{table}$ . After finishing with hypothesis testing, the researcher came up with a conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

After collecting various data sources using measurement technique, the researcher presented the research findings guided by the research question. The research question “What was the correlation between students’ self-esteem and speaking performance?” was answered after the researcher collected and calculated the data of students’ speaking score and students’ self-esteem score in questionnaire. To maintain the reliability and validity of students’ speaking score, the researcher also conducted a structured interview with one of the lecturers in English Education Study Program, Tanjungpura University who taught the speaking subject. Finally, the researcher discussed the research findings supported by the theory to fulfill the gap.

#### The level of students’ self-esteem

##### *Individual score*

Among 104 respondents, there were 64 students with high self-esteem, 6 students with medium self-esteem (neither high nor low self-esteem), and 34 students with low self-esteem.

##### *Mean score*

The mean score of the self-esteem was also calculated. The result was 16.84615. This indicated that the overall self-esteem level of Batch 2016 students from English Department 2019/2020, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University was high.

#### The level of students’ speaking score

There were three scores observed in this study, namely, Speaking for General Communication, Speaking for Particular Purposes, and Speaking for Academic Purposes.

##### *Individual score*

Regarding the individual score, the findings indicated that there were 57 students who got the average score 80 and above. According to the grading scheme of Tanjungpura University, this showed that they had ‘very good’ speaking skill. There were 45 students who got the score between 70-79. This showed that they had ‘good’ speaking competence. Only minorities of students (2 students) who got the score of 66 and 68. Both of them were grouped into students with fair speaking competence.

##### *Mean score*

The mean score of student’s speaking competence was also calculated. The result was 81. In conclusion, the average speaking score of eighth semester students from English Department 2019/2020, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University was very good.

#### The correlation between self-esteem and speaking skill

The calculation result showed that the correlation coefficient was 0,404335921. According to the Categorization of Correlation Coefficient which is shown in Table 1, it can be concluded that the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance was moderate.

#### Hypothesis Testing

To do the hypothesis testing, the researcher determined the value of level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) as 0.05. Then, the researcher identified the value of  $r_{table}$  by finding the Df.

$Df = n - 2 = 104 - 2 = 102$ . Thus, according to the percentage of level of significance and Df, the researcher could identify the value of  $r_{table}$  (See Appendix 7). The  $r_{table}$  was 0.1927 while the  $r_{xy}$

was 0,404335921. Since the  $r_{xy}$  was bigger than  $r_{table}$ , thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. In conclusion, there was correlation between students' self-esteem and speaking performance in the eighth semester students of FKIP UNTAN in the academic year 2019-2020.

## Discussion

From the research findings, it is known that the students of eighth semester students of FKIP UNTAN in the academic year 2019-2020 have high level of self-esteem. Moreover, their average speaking score also showed they have 'very good' speaking proficiency. After the researcher computed the scores of self-esteems and speaking subjects, it was found that the correlation coefficient was 0,404335921. According to the Categorization of Correlation Coefficient stated by Sugiyono (2011), the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance was moderate. In the hypothesis testing section, it was also known that alternative hypothesis was accepted since the  $r_{xy}$  (0,404335921) was bigger than  $r_{table}$  (0.1927). This has proven the importance of self-esteem towards speaking performance.

Besides the result of calculation, the results of interview also revealed the importance of self-esteem in determining one's speaking performance. This was shown by the lecturer's response in telling the scoring rubric of the Speaking for Academic Purposes subject. Moreover, at the end of interview session, the lecturer also shared her opinion regarding the necessity of having self-esteem in public speaking. This finding was in line with Mohseni and Ameri (2010) who have stated that self-esteem as one of the affective factors contributed to one's speaking performance.

There were also several previous studies which support the research finding. First, Satriani (2019) found that there is a highly significant positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL context.

Second, Kalanzadeh, Mahnegar, Hassanejad, and Bakhtiarvand (2013) in their studies on the influence of self-esteem towards speaking skill discovered that high self-esteem students were found to be more inclined to involve themselves in the conversations and other spoken activities on the classroom including the oral production of stories in English. It was found that there was a statistically significant correlation between the students' self – esteem and their verbal performance (Kalanzadeh, et al., 2013). All in all, self-esteem plays a critical role in one's speaking performance.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

Self-esteem is a sense of personal efficacy and a sense of personal worth. Self-esteem is considered as one of the affective factors that influences one's speaking performance. Thus, the purpose of this research was to describe the correlation between students' self-esteem and speaking performance. There were three findings concluded. Firstly, the overall self-esteem level of eighth semester students from English Department 2019/2020, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University was high. Secondly, the average speaking score of eighth semester students from English Department 2019/2020, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University was very good. Finally, the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance was moderate. The hypothesis testing indicated that the alternative hypothesis was accepted which means there was significant correlation between students' self-esteem and speaking performance.

### Suggestion

According to the research findings, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions for parents and teachers. As self-esteem contributes to students' language learning particularly speaking performance, it is important to consider the enhancement of self-esteem

as the primary goal of education. It is suggested that parents also focused on the development of self-esteem. For instance, the parent can motivate their children to speak English frequently. Besides focusing on academic outcomes, it is recommended that the teachers also focused on the affective factors of the students, especially self-esteem. This can be done by providing opportunities for the students to practice speaking without giving too much immediate correction. The feedback can be given after the speaking performance to build student's self-esteem. It is known that speaking performance can be affected by many factors such as motivation and anxiety. Thus, the researcher would like to suggest the future research regarding the influence of motivation or anxiety towards speaking performance. The researcher also recommends that research investigating other language skills can also be conducted in the future.

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